

REMARKS

The present patent application has been reviewed in light of the office action, dated March 31, 2006, in which claims 1, 2, 5, 6, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ishiwata, U.S. Patent No. 5,189,529 (hereinafter "Ishiwata"), claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishiwata in view of Hemmings et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,728,009 (hereinafter "Hemmings"), claims 17-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter, and claims 17-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Assignee regards as the invention. Claims 3, 4, and 16 are noted as being allowable if rewritten in independent form incorporating all of the limitation of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 8-11 and 26 are noted as allowed. Reconsideration of the above-referenced patent application in view of the foregoing amendment and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 3-4, 8-11, 16, and 26 are pending. Claims 3, 10, and 16 have been amended. Claims 1-2, 5-7, 12-15, 17-25, and 27-29 have been cancelled. Where claims have been amended and/or cancelled, such amendments and/or cancellations are done without prejudice and/or waiver and/or disclaimer to the claimed and/or disclosed subject matter, and the applicant and/or assignee reserves the right to claim this subject matter and/or other disclosed subject matter in a continuing application.

Rejections and Objections to Claims

Claims 3-4 and 16 have been amended to re-write the claims in independent form incorporating the limitations of the base claim and intervening claims. Therefore,

Assignee respectfully requests that the examiner withdraw the objections to these claims.

It is noted that the Assignee's failure to comment directly upon any of the positions asserted by the Examiner in the office action does not indicate agreement or acquiescence with those asserted positions.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully asserted that all of the claims pending in the present patent application are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions, he is invited to contact the undersigned at (503) 439-6500.

Reconsideration of the present patent application and early allowance of all the claims is respectfully requested. Please charge any underpayments or credit any overpayments to deposit account no. 50-3703.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 6/30/06

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail with sufficient postage in an envelope address Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1460, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on:

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